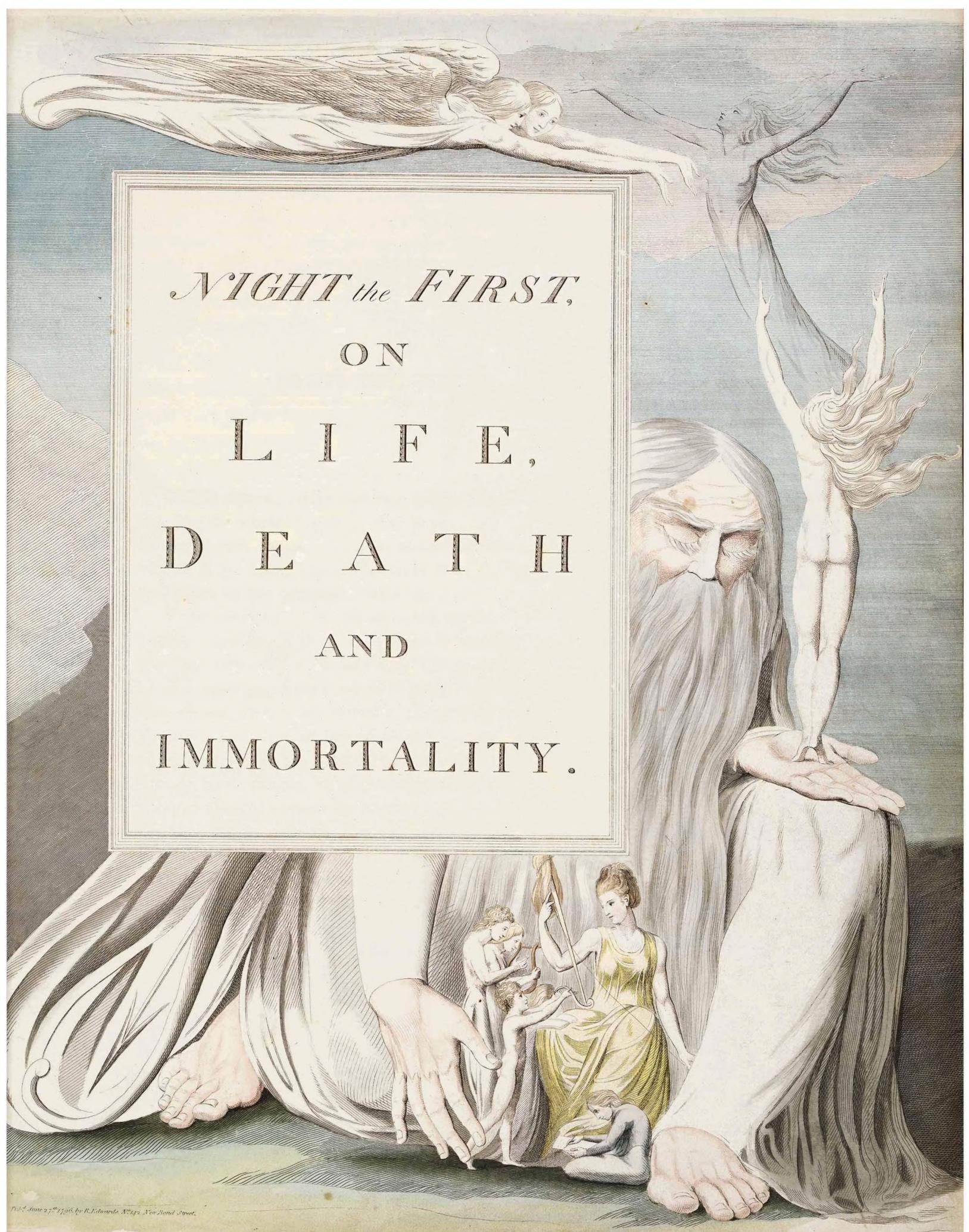


NIGHT the FIRST,
ON
L I F E ,
D E A T H
AND
IMMORTALITY.



NIGHT THE FIRST.

TIRIED nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep !
 He, like the world, his ready visit pays
 Where fortune smiles ; the wretched he forsakes :
 * Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
 And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.

From short, as usual, and disturb'd repose,
 I wake : how happy they, who wake no more !
 Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
 I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
 Tumultuous ; where my wreck'd, desponding thought
 From wave to wave of fancied misery,
 At random drove, her helm of reason lost :
 Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain,
 A bitter change ! severer for severe :
 The day too short for my distress ! and night,
 Even in the zenith of her dark domain,
 Is sunshine, to the colour of my fate.



An heir of glory ! a frail child of dust !
 Helpless immortal ! insect infinite !
 A worm ! a God !—I tremble at myself,
 And in myself am lost ! At home a stranger,
 Thought wanders up and down, surprised, aghast,
 And wond'ring at her own : how reason reels !
 O what a miracle to man is man,
 Triumphantly distress'd ! what joy, what dread !
 Alternately transported, and alarm'd !
 What can preserve my life ? or what destroy ?
 An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave—
 Legions of angels can't confine me there.

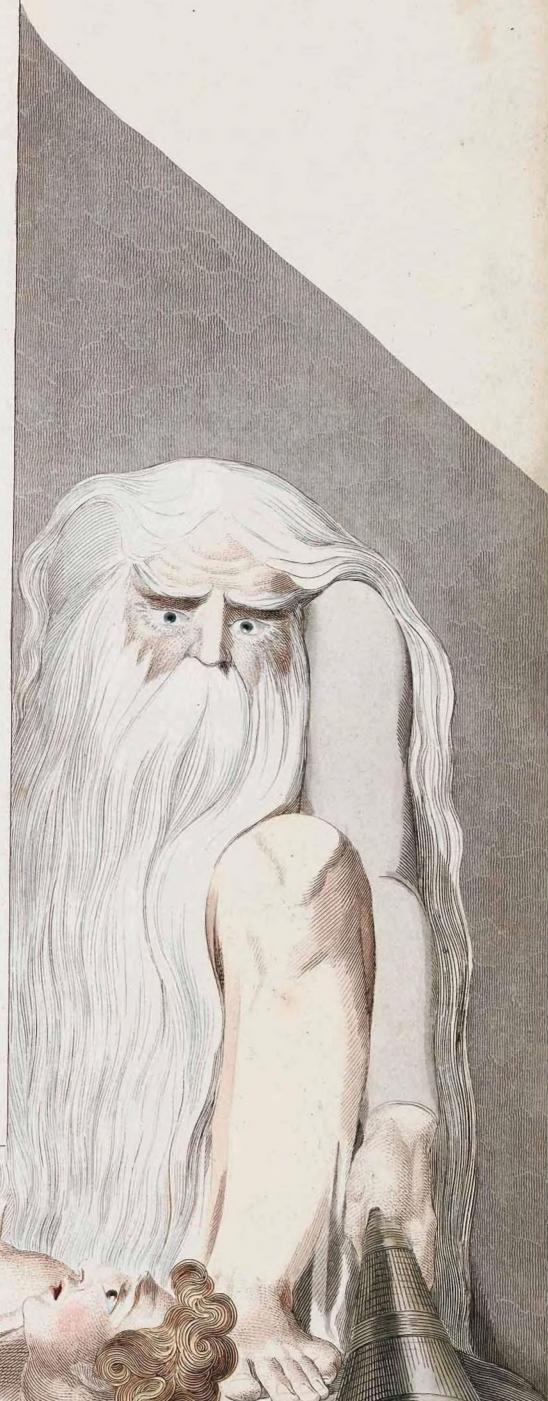
'Tis past conjecture : all things rise in proof.
 While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spread :
 * What, though my soul fantastick measures trod
 O'er fairy fields ; or mourn'd along the gloom
 Of pathless woods ; or down the craggy steep
 Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool ;
 Or scaled the cliff ; or danced on hollow winds,
 With antick shapes wild natives of the brain ?
 Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
 Of subtler essence than the trodden clod ;
 Active, aërial, tow'ring, unconfined,
 Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
 Even silent night proclaims my soul immortal ;
 Even silent night proclaims eternal day.
 For human weal, Heaven husbands all events ;
 Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost ?
 Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,

How richly were my noontide trances hung
With gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys,
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective !

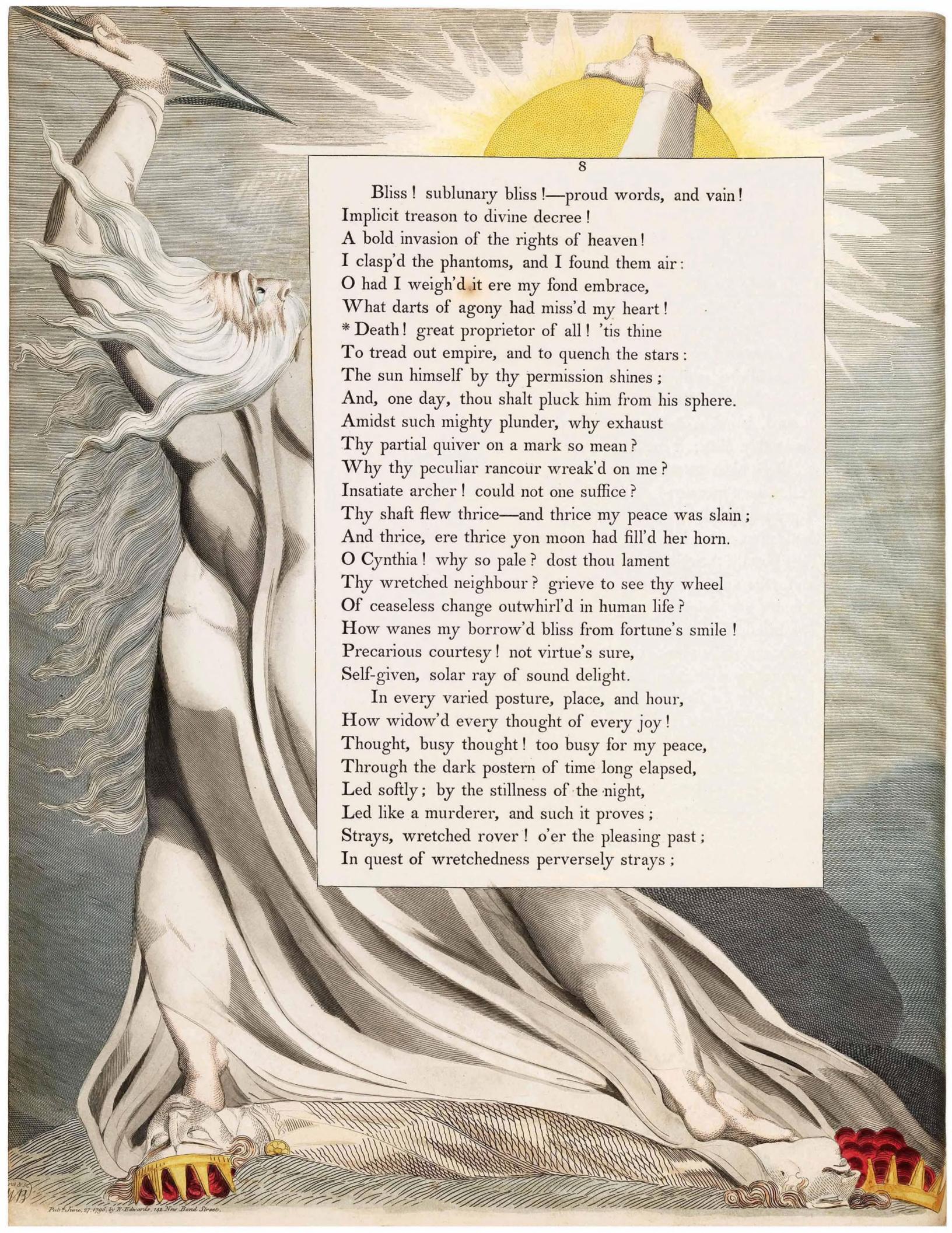
* Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting I 'woke, and found myself undone.
Where's now my frenzy's pompous furniture ?
The cobweb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mould'ring mud, is royalty to me :
The spider's most attenuated thread,
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss ; it breaks at every breeze.

O ye blest scenes of permanent delight !
Full, above measure ! lasting, beyond bound !
A perpetuity of bliss, is bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light.
Safe are you lodged above these rolling spheres ;
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour,
And rarely for the better ; or the best,
More mortal than the common births of fate :
Each moment has its sickle, emulous
Of time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
Strikes empires from the root ; each moment plays
His little weapon in the narrower sphere
Of sweet domestick comfort, and cuts down
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.



Bliss ! sublunary bliss !—proud words, and vain !
 Implicit treason to divine decree !
 A bold invasion of the rights of heaven !
 I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air :
 O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,
 What darts of agony had miss'd my heart !
 * Death ! great proprietor of all ! 'tis thine
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars :
 The sun himself by thy permission shines ;
 And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.
 Amidst such mighty plunder, why exhaust
 Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean ?
 Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me ?
 Insatiate archer ! could not one suffice ?
 Thy shaft flew thrice—and thrice my peace was slain ;
 And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.
 O Cynthia ! why so pale ? dost thou lament
 Thy wretched neighbour ? grieve to see thy wheel
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life ?
 How wanes my borrow'd bliss from fortune's smile !
 Precarious courtesy ! not virtue's sure,
 Self-given, solar ray of sound delight.

In every varied posture, place, and hour,
 How widow'd every thought of every joy !
 Thought, busy thought ! too busy for my peace,
 Through the dark postern of time long elapsed,
 Led softly ; by the stillness of the night,
 Led like a murderer, and such it proves ;
 Strays, wretched rover ! o'er the pleasing past ;
 In quest of wretchedness perversely strays ;



What numbers, once in fortune's lap high-fed,
 Solicit the cold hand of charity—
 To shock us more—solicit it in vain !
 Ye silken sons of pleasure ! since in pains
 You rue more modish visits, visit here,
 And breathe from your debauch : give, and reduce
 Surfeit's dominion o'er you—but so great
 Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Happy ! did sorrow seize on such alone :
 Not prudence can defend, or virtue save :
 * Disease invades the chaste temperance,
 And punishment the guiltless ; and alarm,
 Through thickest shades pursues the fond of peace.
 Man's caution often into danger turns,
 And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.
 Not happiness itself makes good her name ;
 Our very wishes give us not our wish :
 How distant oft the thing we doat on most,
 From that for which we doat, felicity !
 The smoothest course of nature has its pains ;
 And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.
 Without misfortune—what calamities !
 And what hostilities—without a foe !
 Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth :
 But endless is the list of human ills,
 And sighs might sooner fail, than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe
 Is tenanted by man ! the rest a waste ;
 Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands—
 Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death :

But rises in demand for her delay;
 She makes a scourge of past prosperity
 To sting thee more, and double thy distress.

LORENZO, fortune makes her court to thee;
 Thy fond heart dances, while the syren sings :
 Dear is thy welfare ; think me not unkind,
 I would not damp, but to secure thy joys :
 Think not that fear is sacred to the storm ;
 Stand on thy guard against the smiles of fate.—
 Is heaven tremendous in its frowns ? most sure—
 And in its favours formidable too :

* Its favours here are trials, not rewards ;
 A call to duty, not discharge from care ;
 And should alarm us, full as much as woes ;
 Awake us to their cause and consequence ;
 And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert.
 Awe nature's tumults, and chastise her joys,
 Lest, while we clasp, we kill them ; nay, invert
 To worse than simple misery their charms :
 Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,
 Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,
 With rage envenom'd rise against our peace.
 Beware what earth calls happiness ; beware
 All joys, but joys that never can expire :
 Who builds on less than an immortal base,
 Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine died with thee, PHILANDER ! thy last sigh
 Dissolved the charm ; the disenchanted earth
 Lost all her lustre : where her glitt'ring towers ?
 Her golden mountains where ?—all darken'd down



To naked waste ; a dreary vale of tears :
 The great magician's dead ! thou poor pale piece
 Of outcast earth—in darkness ! what a change
 From yesterday ! thy darling hope so near,
 Long-labour'd prize, O how ambition flush'd
 Thy glowing cheek ! ambition, truly great,
 Of virtuous praise : death's subtle seed within,
 Sly, treacherous miner ! working in the dark,
 Smiled at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd
 The worm to riot on that rose so red,
 Unfaded ere it fell—one moment's prey !

Man's foresight is conditionally wise ;
 LORENZO ! wisdom into folly turns
 Oft, the first instant its idea fair
 To lab'ring thought is born : how dim our eye !
 * The present moment terminates our sight ;
 Clouds, thick as those on doomsday, drown the next ;
 We penetrate, we prophesy in vain :
 Time is dealt out by particles ; and each,
 Ere mingled with the streaming sands of life,
 By fate's inviolable oath is sworn
 Deep silence, " where eternity begins."

By nature's law, what may be, may be now ;
 There's no prerogative in human hours :
 In human hearts what bolder thought can rise,
 Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn ?
 Where is to-morrow ?—in another world !
 For numbers this is certain ; the reverse
 Is sure to none ; and yet on this perhaps,
 This peradventure—infamous for lies,

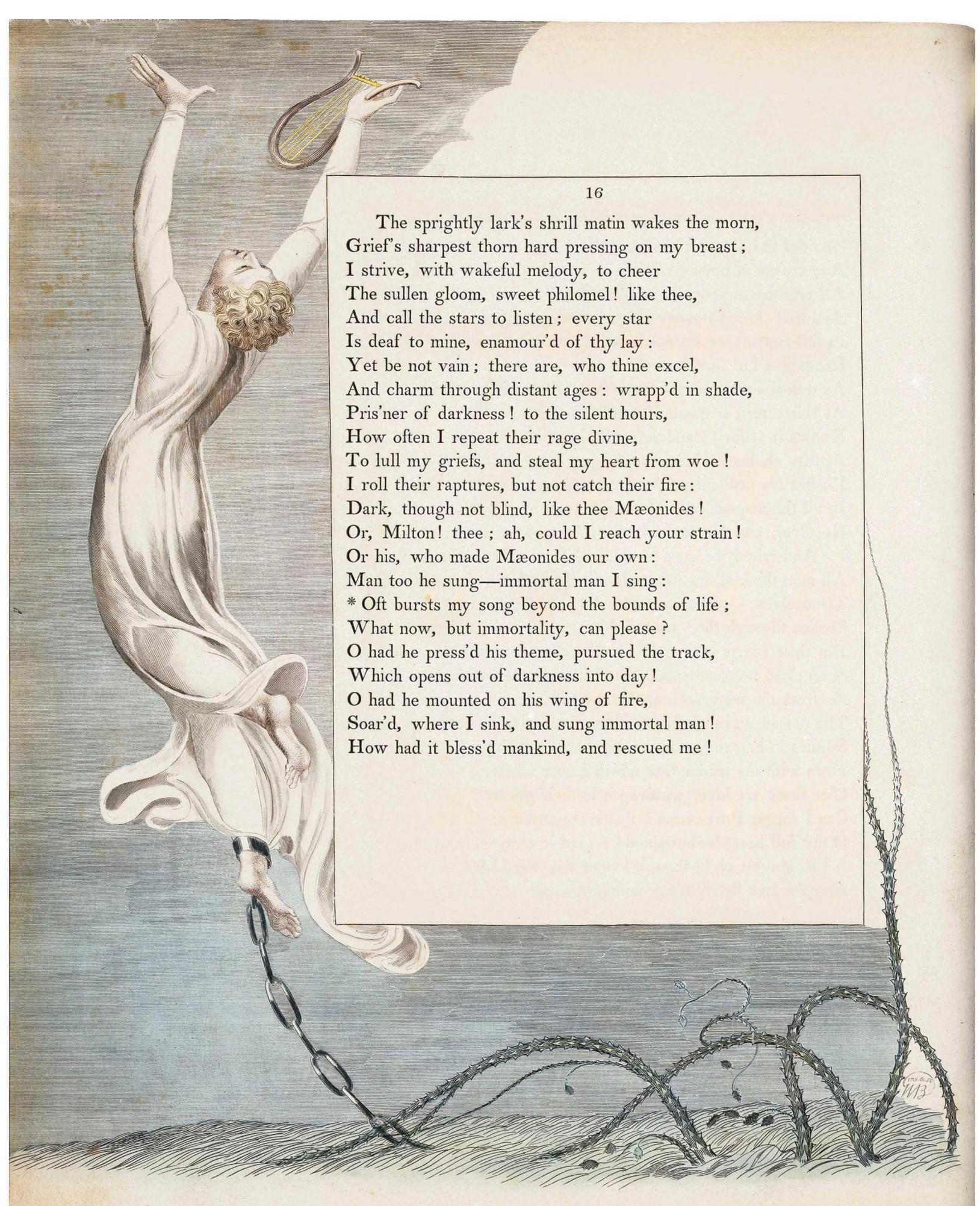


The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone :
 'Tis not in folly, not to scorn a fool ;
 And scarce in human wisdom to do more :
 All promise is poor dilatory man,
 And that through every stage : when young, indeed,
 In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
 Unanxious for ourselves ; and only wish,
 As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise :
 At thirty man suspects himself a fool ;
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan ;
 At fifty chides his infamous delay,
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve ;
 In all the magnanimity of thought
 Resolves, and re-resolves ; then dies the same.

And why ? because he thinks himself immortal :
 All men think all men mortal, but themselves ;
 Themselves ;—when some alarming shock of fate
 Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden dread ;
 But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
 Soon close ; where pass'd the shaft no trace is found.
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains ;
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel ;
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death :
 Even with the tender tear which nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
 Can I forget PHILANDER ? that were strange :
 O my full heart !—but should I give it vent,
 * The longest night though longer far, would fail,
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.



The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn,
Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast ;
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
The sullen gloom, sweet philomel ! like thee,
And call the stars to listen ; every star
Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay :
Yet be not vain ; there are, who thine excel,
And charm through distant ages : wrapp'd in shade,
Pris'ner of darkness ! to the silent hours,
How often I repeat their rage divine,
To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe !
I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire :
Dark, though not blind, like thee Mæonides !
Or, Milton ! thee ; ah, could I reach your strain !
Or his, who made Mæonides our own :
Man too he sung—immortal man I sing :
* Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life ;
What now, but immortality, can please ?
O had he press'd his theme, pursued the track,
Which opens out of darkness into day !
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
Soar'd, where I sink, and sung immortal man !
How had it bless'd mankind, and rescued me !

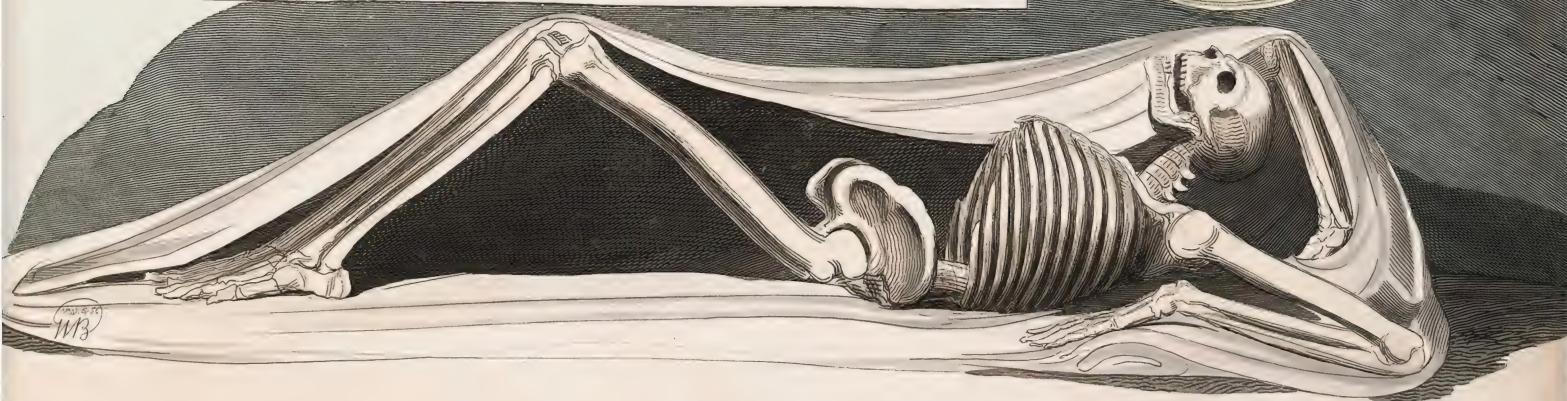
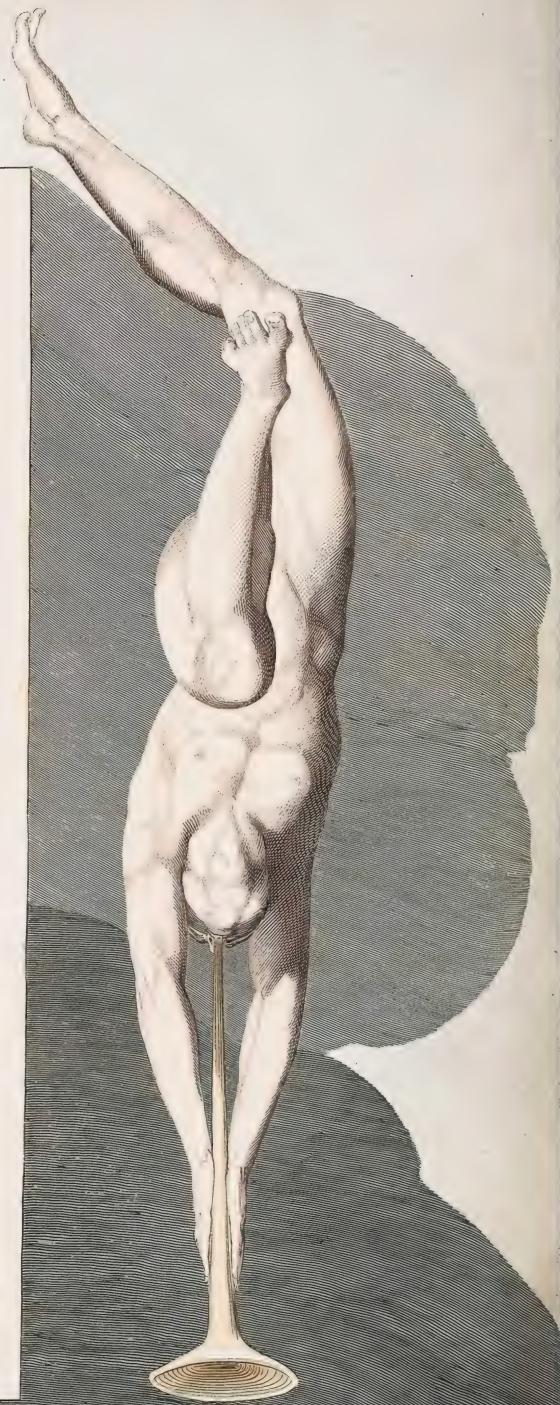


NIGHT the SECOND
ON
TIME,
DEATH
AND
FRIENDSHIP.



NIGHT THE SECOND.

“ WHEN the cock crew, he wept”—smote by that eye
 Which looks on me, on all ; that power, who bids
 This midnight centinel, with clarion shrill,
 * Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,
 Rouse souls from slumber into thoughts of heaven :
 Shall I too weep ? where then is fortitude ?
 And, fortitude abandon’d, where is man ?
 I know the terms on which he sees the light ;
 He that is born, is listed ; life is war,
 Eternal war with woe : who bears it best,
 Deserves it least—on other themes I’ll dwell.
 LORENZO ! let me turn my thoughts on thee,
 And thine, on themes may profit ; profit there,
 Where most thy need—themes, too, the genuine growth
 Of dear PHILANDER’s dust : he, thus, though dead,
 May still befriend.—What themes ? time’s wondrous price,
 Death, friendship, and PHILANDER’s final scene.



Pregnant with all eternity can give ;
 Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile :
 Who murders time, he crushes in the birth
 A power ethereal, only not adored.

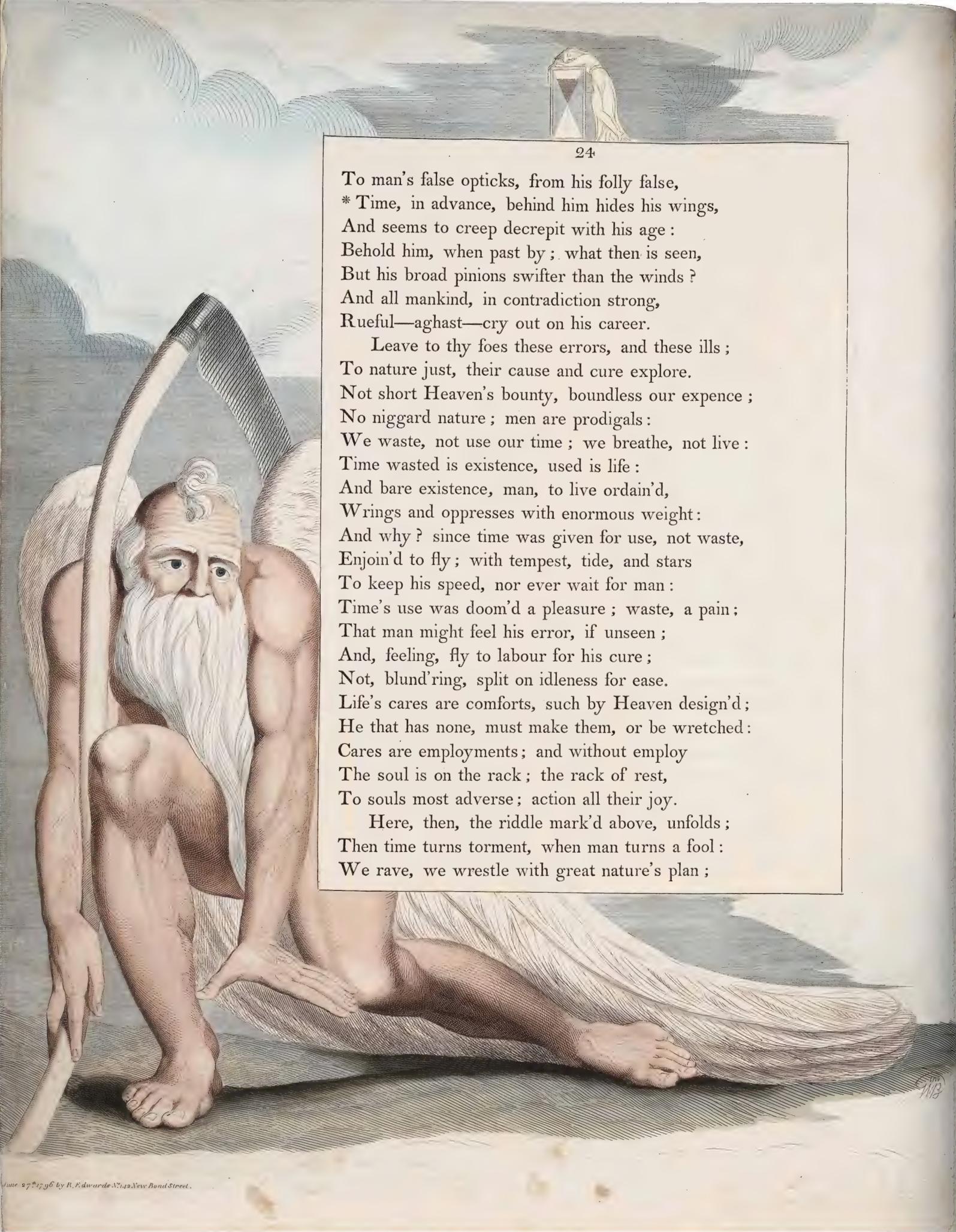
Ah ! how unjust to nature and himself,
 Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man !
 Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
 * We censure nature for a span too short ;
 That span too short, we tax as tedious too ;
 Torture invention, all expedients tire,
 To lash the ling'ring moments into speed,
 And whirl us, happy riddance ! from ourselves.
 Art, brainless art ! our furious charioteer,
 For nature's voice unstifled would recall,
 Drives headlong tow'rds the precipice of death—
 Death, most our dread ; death thus more dreadful made
 O what a riddle of absurdity !

Leisure is pain ; take off our chariot-wheels,
 How heavily we drag the load of life !
 Blest leisure is our curse ; like that of Cain,
 It makes us wander ; wander earth around
 To fly that tyrant, thought. As Atlas groan'd
 The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour :
 We cry for mercy to the next amusement ;
 The next amusement mortgages our fields—
 Slight inconvenience ! prisons hardly frown—
 From hateful time if prisons set us free ;
 Yet when death kindly tenders us relief,
 We call him cruel ; years to moments shrink,
 Ages to years : the telescope is turn'd, .

To man's false opticks, from his folly false,
 * Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
 And seems to creep decrepit with his age :
 Behold him, when past by ; what then is seen,
 But his broad pinions swifter than the winds ?
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
 Rueful—aghast—cry out on his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors, and these ills ;
 To nature just, their cause and cure explore.
 Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expence ;
 No niggard nature ; men are prodigals :
 We waste, not use our time ; we breathe, not live :
 Time wasted is existence, used is life :
 And bare existence, man, to live ordain'd,
 Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight :
 And why ? since time was given for use, not waste,
 Enjoin'd to fly ; with tempest, tide, and stars
 To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man :
 Time's use was doom'd a pleasure ; waste, a pain ;
 That man might feel his error, if unseen ;
 And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure ;
 Not, blund'ring, split on idleness for ease.
 Life's cares are comforts, such by Heaven design'd ;
 He that has none, must make them, or be wretched :
 Cares are employments ; and without employ
 The soul is on the rack ; the rack of rest,
 To souls most adverse ; action all their joy.

Here, then, the riddle mark'd above, unfolds ;
 Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool :
 We rave, we wrestle with great nature's plan ;



We thwart the DEITY ; and 'tis decreed,
 Who thwart his will shall contradict their own :
 Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourselves ;
 Our thoughts at enmity ; our bosom-broil :
 We push time from us, and we wish him back ;
 Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life ;
 Life we think long, and short ; death seek, and shun ;
 Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,
 United jar, and yet are loth to part.

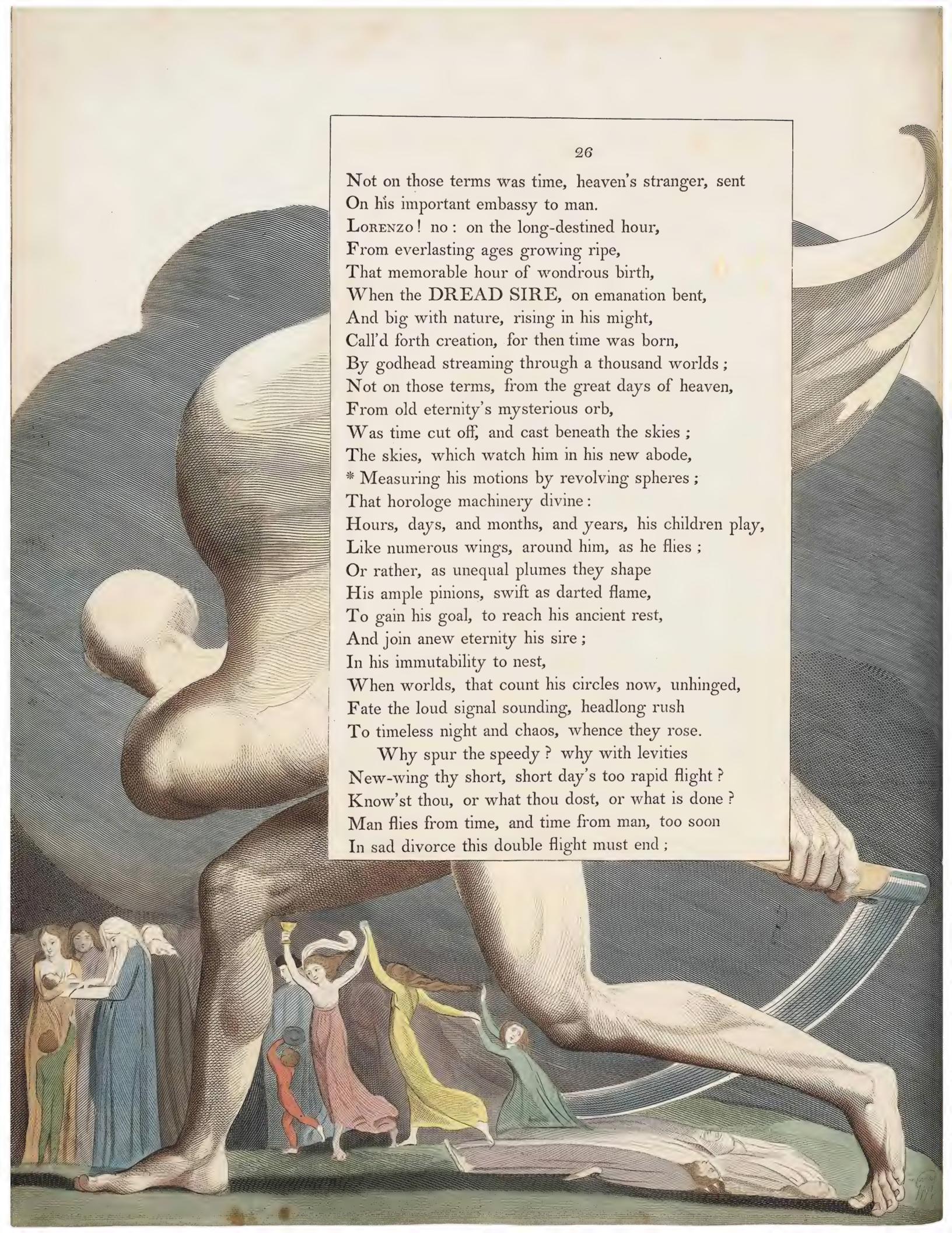
Oh the dark days of vanity ! while here,
 How tasteless ! and how terrible when gone !
 Gone ! they ne'er go ; when past, they haunt us still ;
 The spirit walks of every day deceased ;
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns :
 Nor death, nor life delight us—if time past,
 And time possess'd, both pain us, what can please ?
 That which the DEITY to please ordain'd—
 Time used : the man who consecrates his hours
 By vigorous effort and an honest aim,
 At once he draws the sting of life and death ;
 He walks with nature—and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen : see next
 Time's nature, origin, importance, speed ;
 And thy great gain from urging his career.
 All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
 He looks on time as nothing : nothing else
 Is truly man's ; 'tis fortune's—Time's a God :
 Hast thou ne'er heard of time's omnipotence ?
 For, or against, what wonders can he do—
 And will ! to stand blank neuter he disdains.

W.B.

Not on those terms was time, heaven's stranger, sent
 On his important embassy to man.
 LORENZO! no : on the long-destined hour,
 From everlasting ages growing ripe,
 That memorable hour of wondrous birth,
 When the DREAD SIRE, on emanation bent,
 And big with nature, rising in his might,
 Call'd forth creation, for then time was born,
 By godhead streaming through a thousand worlds ;
 Not on those terms, from the great days of heaven,
 From old eternity's mysterious orb,
 Was time cut off, and cast beneath the skies ;
 The skies, which watch him in his new abode,
 * Measuring his motions by revolving spheres ;
 That horologe machinery divine :
 Hours, days, and months, and years, his children play,
 Like numerous wings, around him, as he flies ;
 Or rather, as unequal plumes they shape
 His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,
 To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,
 And join anew eternity his sire ;
 In his immutability to nest,
 When worlds, that count his circles now, unhinged,
 Fate the loud signal sounding, headlong rush
 To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy ? why with levities
 New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight ?
 Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done ?
 Man flies from time, and time from man, too soon
 In sad divorce this double flight must end ;



And then, where are we ? where, LORENZO, then
 Thy sports—thy pomps ?—I grant thee, in a state
 Not unambitious ; in the ruffled shroud,
 Thy parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath :
 Has death his fopperies ? then well may life
 Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well-array'd ! ye lilies of our land !
 Ye lilies male ! who neither toil, nor spin,
 As sister lilies might ;—if not so wise
 As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight !
 Ye delicate ! who nothing can support,
 Yourselves most insupportable ! for whom
 The winter rose must blow, the sun put on
 A brighter beam in Leo, silky-soft
 Favonius breathe still softer, or be chid ;
 And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,
 And robes, and notions framed in foreign looms !
 O ye LORENZOS of our age ! who deem
 One moment unamused, a misery
 Not made for feeble man ; who call aloud
 For every bauble, drivell'd o'er by sense,
 For rattles and conceits of every cast,
 For change of follies and relays of joy,
 To drag your patience through the tedious length
 Of a short winter's day—say—sages ; say
 Wit's oracles ; say—dreamers of gay dreams ;
 How will you weather an eternal night,
 Where such expedients fail ?

* O treacherous conscience ! while she seems to sleep
 On rose and myrtle, lull'd with syren song ;



Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world—
 The world, that gulph of souls, immortal souls,
 Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire
 To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
 On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters changed,
 Though we from earth; ethereal, they that fell.
 Such veneration due, O man! to man.

Who venerate themselves, the world despise.
 For what, gay friend, 'is this escutcheon'd world,
 Which hangs out death in one eternal night?
 A night, that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
 And wraps our thought, at banquets, in the shroud.
 Life's little stage is a small eminence,
 Inch-high the grave above; that home of man,
 Where dwells the multitude; we gaze around;
 We read their monuments; we sigh; and while
 We sigh, we sink; and are what we deplored:
 Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot!

Is death at distance? no: he has been on thee;
 And given sure earnest of his final blow.
 Those hours, which lately smiled, where are they now?
 Pallid to thought, and ghastly! drown'd, all drown'd
 In that great deep, which nothing disembogues;
 And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown:
 The rest are on the wing; how fleet their flight!
 Already has the fatal train took fire;
 A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;
 The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

* 'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
 And ask them, what report they bore to heaven;



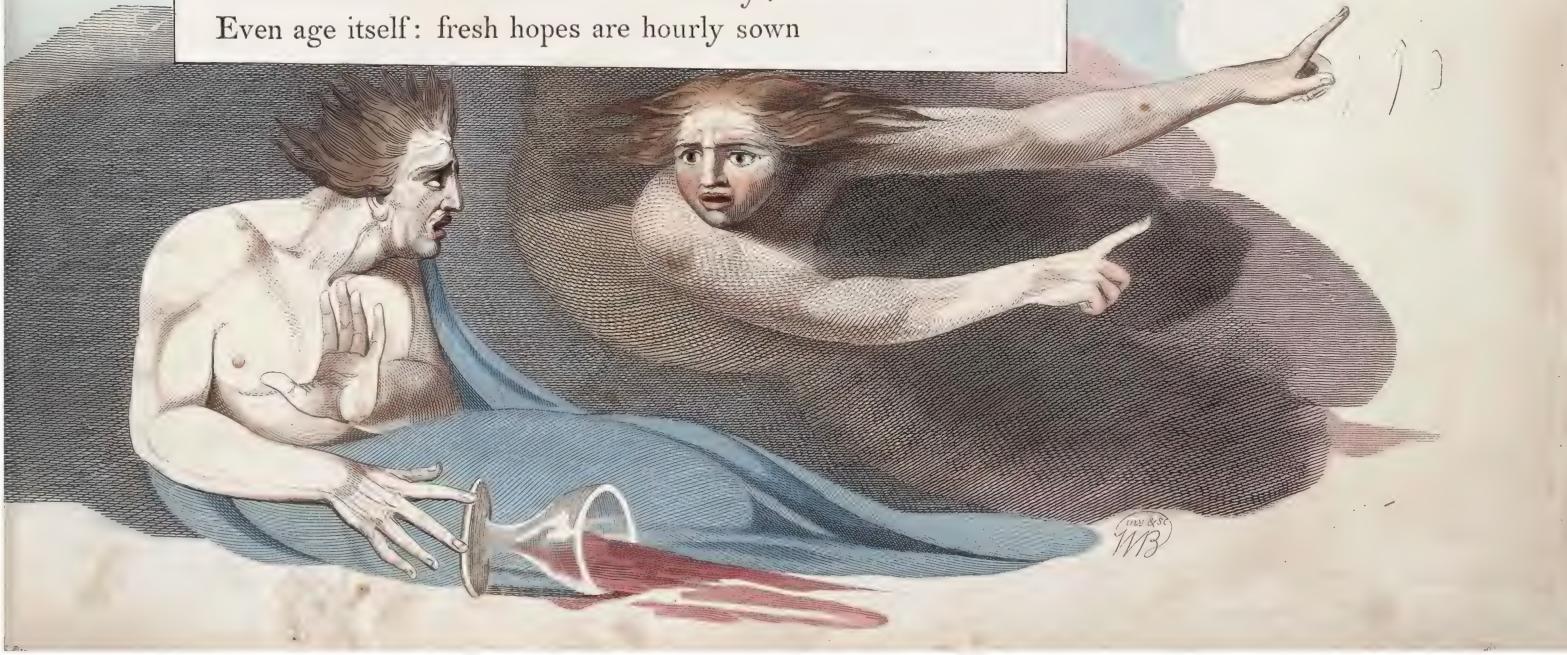
Erewhile high-flush'd with insolence and wine ?
 * Like that, the dial speaks ; and points to thee,
 LORENZO ! loth to break thy banquet up.
 " O man, thy kingdom is departing from thee ;
 " And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade."
 Its silent language such ; nor need'st thou call
 Thy magi, to decypher what it means :
 Know, like the Median, fate is in thy walls :
 Dost ask, how ? whence ? Belshazzar-like, amazed ?
 Man's make encloses the sure seeds of death ;
 Life feeds the murderer : ingrate ! he thrives
 On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But here, LORENZO, the delusion lies ;
 That solar shadow, as it measures life,
 It life resembles too : life speeds away
 From point to point, though seeming to stand still :
 The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth,
 Too subtle is the movement to be seen ;
 Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.
 Warnings point out our danger ; gnomons, time :
 As these are useless when the sun is set ;
 So those, but when more glorious reason shines :
 Reason should judge in all ; in reason's eye,
 That sedentary shadow travels hard :
 But such our gravitation to the wrong,
 So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
 'Tis later with the wise, than he's aware ;
 A Wilmington goes slower than the sun ;
 And all mankind mistake their time of day ;
 Even age itself : fresh hopes are hourly sown

MENE N

TEK.

W.B.



Had thought been all, sweet speech had been denied ;
 Speech, thought's canal ! speech, thought's criterion too !
 Thought in the mine may come forth gold or dross ;
 When coin'd in words, we know its real worth :
 If sterling, store it for thy future use ;
 'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown :
 Thought too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd ;
 * Teaching, we learn ; and giving, we retain
 The births of intellect ; when dumb, forgot.
 Speech ventilates our intellectual fire ;
 Speech burnishes our mental magazine ;
 Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
 What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie
 Plunged to the hilts in venerable tomes,
 And rusted ; who might have borne an edge,
 And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech !
 If born blest heirs to half their mother's tongue !
 'Tis thought's exchange, which, like th' alternate push
 Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
 And defecates the student's standing pool.

In contemplation is his proud resource ?
 'Tis poor as proud : by converse unsustain'd
 Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field :
 Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
 Of due restraint ; and emulation's spur
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals awed :
 'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,
 As exercise for salutary rest :
 By that untutor'd, contemplation raves ;
 And nature's fool, by wisdom's is outdone.



Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,
And, emulously rapid in her race.
O the soft enmity ! endearing strife !
This carries friendship to her noon-tide point,
And gives the rivet of eternity.

From friendship, which outlives my former themes,
Glorious surviver of old time, and death !
From friendship thus, that flower of heavenly seed,
The wise extract earth's most hyblean bliss,
Superior wisdom crown'd with smiling joy.

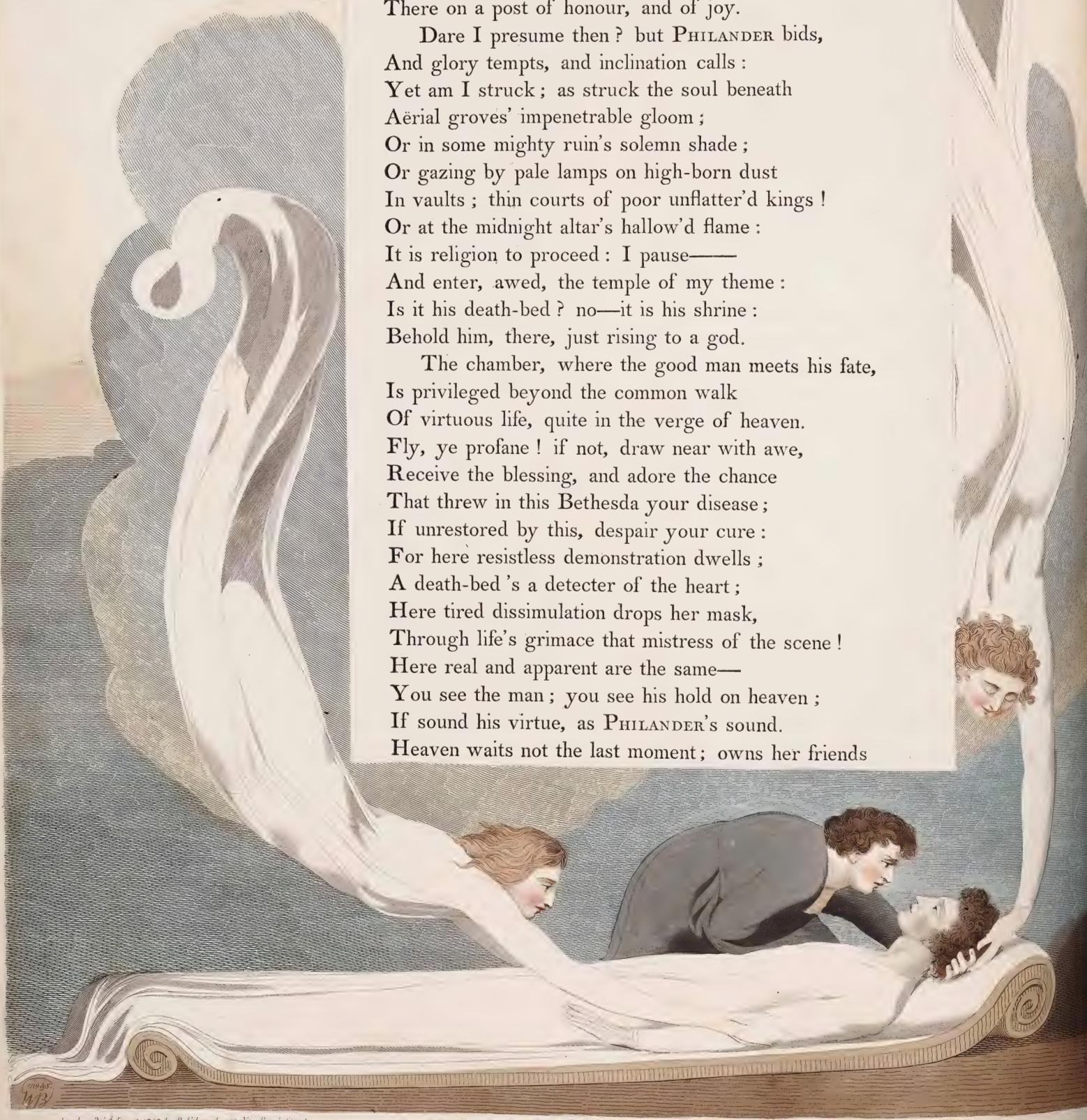
But for whom blossoms this elysian flower ?
Abroad they find, who cherish it at home.
LORENZO ! pardon what my love extorts,
An honest love, and not afraid to frown.
Though choice of follies fasten on the great,
None clings more obstinate than fancy fond
That sacred friendship is their easy prey ;
Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,
Or fascination of a high-born smile.
Their smiles, the great, and the coquet throw out
For other hearts, tenacious of their own ;
And we no less of ours, when such the bait.
Ye fortune's cofferers ! ye powers of wealth !
You do your rent-rolls most felonious wrong,
By taking our attachment to yourselves :
Can gold gain friendship ? impudence of hope !
As well mere man an angel might beget :
* Love, and love only, is the loan for love.
LORENZO ! pride repress ; nor hope to find
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.



By mortal hand—it merits a divine :
 *Angels should paint it, angels ever there ;
 There on a post of honour, and of joy.

Dare I presume then ? but PHILANDER bids,
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls :
 Yet am I struck ; as struck the soul beneath
 Aërial groves' impenetrable gloom ;
 Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade ;
 Or gazing by pale lamps on high-born dust
 In vaults ; thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings !
 Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame :
 It is religion to proceed : I pause——
 And enter, awed, the temple of my theme :
 Is it his death-bed ? no—it is his shrine :
 Behold him, there, just rising to a god.

The chamber, where the good man meets his fate,
 Is privileged beyond the common walk
 Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.
 Fly, ye profane ! if not, draw near with awe,
 Receive the blessing, and adore the chance
 That threw in this Bethesda your disease ;
 If unrestored by this, despair your cure :
 For here resistless demonstration dwells ;
 A death-bed's a detecter of the heart ;
 Here tired dissimulation drops her mask,
 Through life's grimace that mistress of the scene !
 Here real and apparent are the same—
 You see the man ; you see his hold on heaven ;
 If sound his virtue, as PHILANDER's sound.
 Heaven waits not the last moment ; owns her friends



On this side death ; and points them out to men :
 A lecture silent, but of sovereign power !
 To vice, confusion ; and to virtue, peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
 Virtue alone has majesty in death ;
 And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns :
 PHILANDER ! he severely frown'd on thee :
 " No warning given—unceremonious fate !
 " A sudden rush from life's meridian joys !
 " A wrench from all we love—from all we are !
 " A restless bed of pain ! a plunge opaque
 " Beyond conjecture ! feeble nature's dread !
 " Strong reason's shudder at the dark unknown !
 " A sun extinguish'd ! a just opening grave !
 " And oh ! the last—last—what ? can words express ?
 " Thought reach ? the last, last—silence of a friend !"
 Where are those horrors, that amazement where,
 This hideous group of ills, which singly shock ?
 Demand from man—I thought him man till now.

Through nature's wreck, through vanquish'd agonies,
 Like the stars struggling through this midnight gloom,
 What gleams of joy ! what more than human peace !
 Where, the frail mortal ? the poor abject worm ?
 No, not in death, the mortal to be found.
 His conduct is a legacy for all,
 Richer than Mammon's for his single heir :
 His comforters he comforts ; great in ruin,
 With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields
 His soul sublime ; and closes with his fate.

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1773

N I G H T
T H E
T H I R D,
N A R C I S S A.



Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend—
But friends how mortal! dangerous the desire.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards !
Inebriate at fair fortune's fountain-head ;
And reeling through the wilderness of joy ;
* Where sense runs savage broke from reason's chain,
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
My fortune is unlike ; unlike my song ;
Unlike the DEITY my song invokes.
I to day's soft-eyed sister pay my court,
Endymion's rival ! and her aid implore ;
Now first implored in succour to the muse.

Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's form,
And modestly forego thine own ! O thou
Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire !
Say, why not Cynthia patroness of song ?
As thou her crescent, she thy character
Assumes ; still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute
This revolution in the world inspired ?
Ye train pierian ! to the lunar sphere,
In silent hour address your ardent call
For aid immortal—less her brother's right.
She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads
The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain ;
A strain for gods, denied to mortal ear.
Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of heaven !
What title or what name endears thee most ?
Cynthia ! Cyllene ! Phœbe !—or dost hear
With higher gust fair P——d of the skies ?

And will not the severe excuse a sigh ?
 Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep ;
 Our tears indulged indeed deserve our shame :
 Ye that e'er lost an angel ! pity me.

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
 Dawning a dimmer day on human sight ;
 And on her cheek, the residence of spring,
 Pale omen sat, and scatter'd fears around
 On all that saw, and who would cease to gaze
 That once had seen ? with haste, parental haste
 I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid north,
 Her native bed, on which bleak boreas blew,
 And bore her nearer to the sun ; the sun,
 As if the sun could envy, check'd his beam,
 Denied his wonted succour, nor with more
 Regret beheld her drooping, than the bells
 Of lilies ! fairest lilies not so fair.

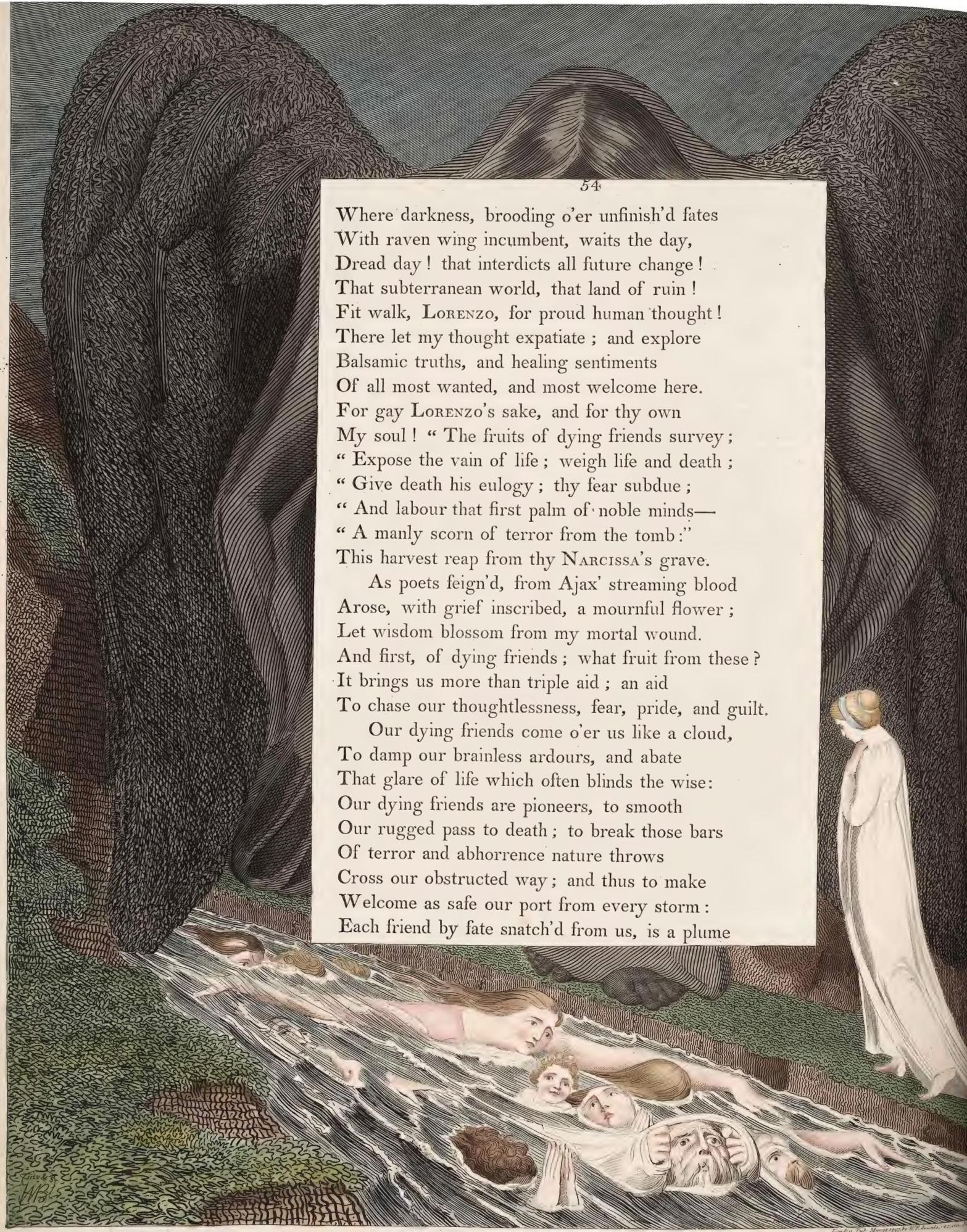
Queen lilies ! and ye painted populace !
 Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives ;
 In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,
 And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,
 And out-blush, mine excepted, every fair ;
 You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand
 Which often cropp'd your odours, incense meet
 To thought so pure : ye lovely fugitives !
 Coëval race with man, for man you smile ;
 Why not smile at him too ? you share indeed
 His sudden pass, but not his constant pain.

So man is made, nought ministers delight
 But what his glowing passions can engage ;

Where darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates
 With raven wing incumbent, waits the day,
 Dread day ! that interdicts all future change !
 That subterranean world, that land of ruin !
 Fit walk, LORENZO, for proud human thought !
 There let my thought expatiate ; and explore
 Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments
 Of all most wanted, and most welcome here.
 For gay LORENZO's sake, and for thy own
 My soul ! " The fruits of dying friends survey ;
 " Expose the vain of life ; weigh life and death ;
 " Give death his eulogy ; thy fear subdue ;
 " And labour that first palm of noble minds—
 " A manly scorn of terror from the tomb :"
 This harvest reap from thy NARCISSA's grave.

As poets feign'd, from Ajax' streaming blood
 Arose, with grief inscribed, a mournful flower ;
 Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.
 And first, of dying friends ; what fruit from these ?
 It brings us more than triple aid ; an aid
 To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
 To damp our brainless ardours, and abate
 That glare of life which often blinds the wise :
 Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth
 Our rugged pass to death ; to break those bars
 Of terror and abhorrence nature throws
 Cross our obstructed way ; and thus to make
 Welcome as safe our port from every storm :
 Each friend by fate snatch'd from us, is a plume



Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,
 Which makes us stoop from our aërial heights,
 And, damp'd with omen of our own decease,
 On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
 Just skim earth's surface, ere we break it up,
 O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,
 And save the world a nuisance: smitten friends
 Are angels sent on errands full of love:
 For us they languish, and for us they die:
 And shall they languish, shall they die in vain?
 * Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades
 Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
 Shall we disdain their silent soft address,
 Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?
 Senseless as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,
 Tread under foot their agonies and groans,
 Frustate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

LORENZO! no; the thought of death indulge;
 Give it its wholesome empire—let it reign,
 That kind chastiser of thy soul in joy;
 Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
 And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast:
 Auspicious aëra! golden days, begin!
 The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.
 And why not think on death? is life the theme
 Of every thought? and wish of every hour?
 And song of every joy? Surprising truth!
 The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.
 To wave the numerous ills that seize on life
 As their own property, their lawful prey;



Still-streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch !

* Trembling each gulp, lest death should snatch the bowl.

Such of our fine ones is the wish refined—

So would they have it : elegant desire !

Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds ?

But such examples might their riot awe.

Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,

Though on bright thought they father all their flights,

To what are they reduced ? to love and hate

The same vain world ; to censure and espouse

This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool

Each moment of each day ; to flatter bad

Through dread of worse ; to cling to this rude rock,

Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ills,

And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,

And infamous for wrecks of human hope——

Scared at the gloomy gulph that yawns beneath.

Such are their triumphs ! such their pangs of joy !

'Tis time, high time to shift this dismal scene :

This hugg'd, this hideous state what art can cure ?

One only, but that one what all may reach,

Virtue—she, wonder-working goddess ! charms

That rock to bloom, and tames the painted shrew ;

And what will more surprise, LORENZO ! gives

To life's sick nauseous iteration, change ;

And straitens nature's circle to a line.

Believest thou this, LORENZO ? lend an ear,

A patient ear, thou'l blushing to disbelieve.

A languid leaden iteration reigns,

And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys



To dust when drop proud nature's proudest spheres,
 And live entire: death is the crown of life;
 Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
 Were death denied, to live would not be life;
 Were death denied, even fools would wish to die:
 Death wounds to cure: we fall, we rise, we reign !
 Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies
 Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.
 Death gives us more than was in Eden lost;
 *This KING OF TERRORS is the PRINCE OF PEACE.
 When shall I die to vanity, pain, death ?
 When shall I die ?—when shall I live for ever ?





F. H. E.

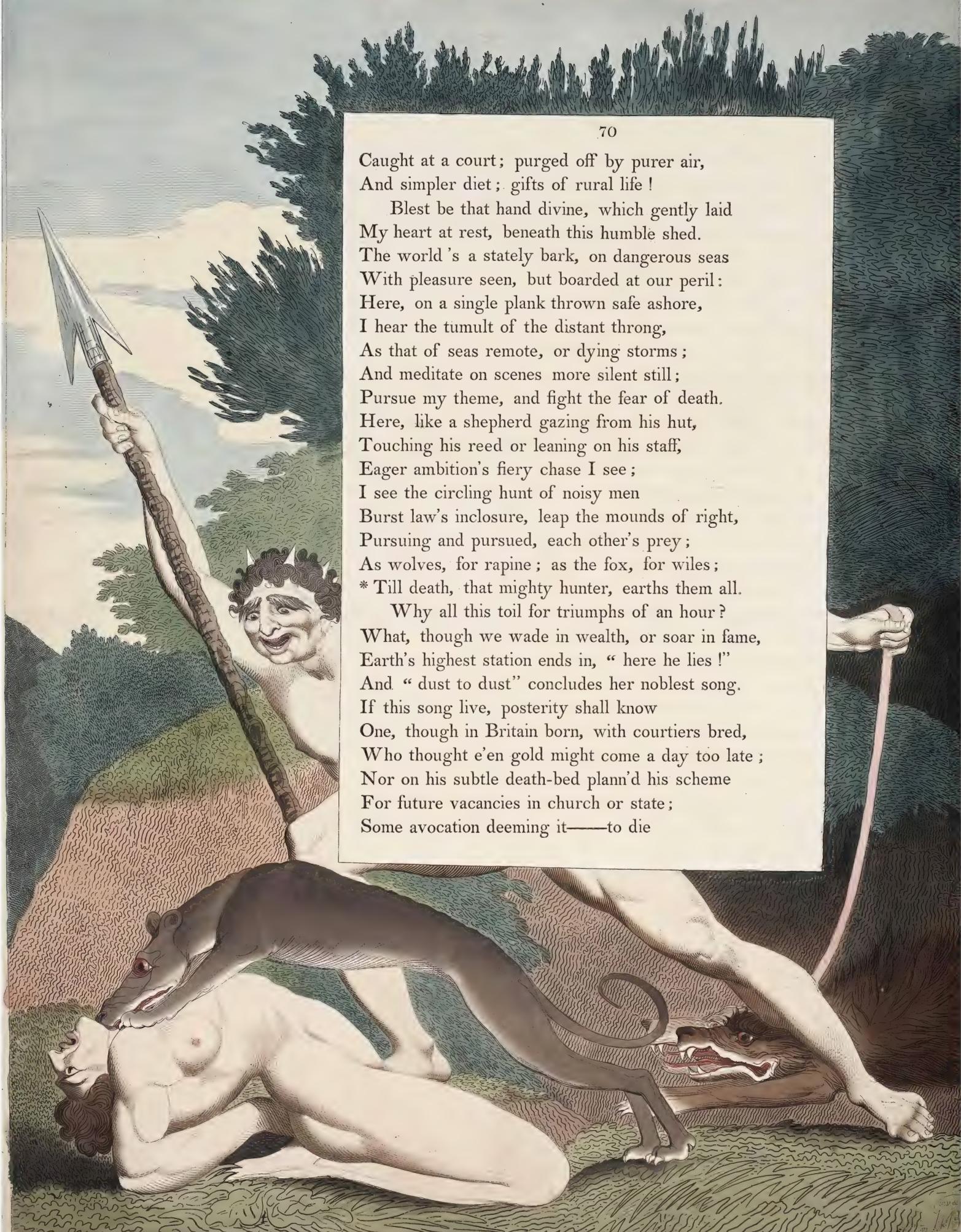
C. H. R. S. T. K. b. W.

F. R. T. H. M. P. H.

Caught at a court; purged off by purer air,
And simpler diet; gifts of rural life!

Blest be that hand divine, which gently laid
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
The world's a stately bark, on dangerous seas
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril:
Here, on a single plank thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
As that of seas remote, or dying storms;
And meditate on scenes more silent still;
Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.
Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed or leaning on his staff,
Eager ambition's fiery chase I see;
I see the circling hunt of noisy men
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,
Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;
As wolves, for rapine; as the fox, for wiles;
* Till death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

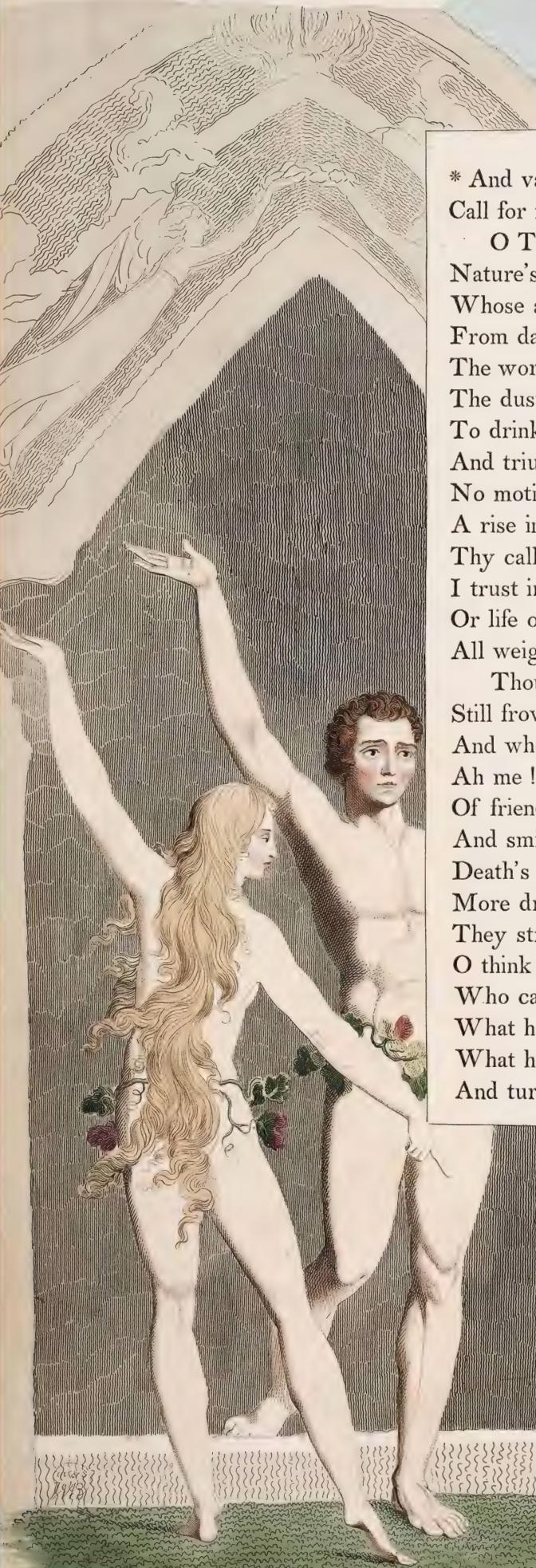
Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
What, though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame,
Earth's highest station ends in, "here he lies!"
And "dust to dust" concludes her noblest song.
If this song live, posterity shall know
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late;
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
For future vacancies in church or state;
Some avocation deeming it—to die



* And vapid ; sense and reason shew the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O THOU ! great arbiter of life and death !
Nature's immortal, immaterial sun !
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
From darkness—teeming darkness where I lay
The worm's inferior, and in rank beneath
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence ! and couldst know
No motive but my bliss ! and hast ordain'd
A rise in blessing ! with the patriarch's joy,
Thy call I follow to the land unknown :
I trust in THEE, and know in whom I trust :
Or life or death is equal ; neither weighs ;
All weight in this—O let me live to THEE !

Though nature's terrors thus may be repress'd ;
Still frowns grim death, guilt points the tyrant's spear :
And whence all human guilt ?—from death forgot.
Ah me ! too long I set at nought the swarm
Of friendly warnings which around me flew ;
And smiled unsmitten : small my cause to smile !
Death's admonitions, like shafts upward shot,
More dreadful by delay ; the longer ere
They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound :
O think how deep, LORENZO ! here it stings :
Who can appease its anguish ? how it burns !
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd thought can draw ?
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb ?



With joy—with grief, that healing hand I see ;
 Ah ! too conspicuous ! it is fix'd on high !
 On high ?—what means my phrensy ? I blaspheme ;
 Alas ! how low ! how far beneath the skies—
 The skies it form'd ! and now it bleeds for me :
 But bleeds the balm I want ?—yet still it bleeds.
 * Draw the dire steel ?—ah no !—the dreadful blessing
 What heart or can sustain, or dares forego ?
 There hangs all human hope !!! that nail supports
 The falling universe !!! that gone, we drop !
 Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
 Creation had been smother'd in her birth :
 Darkness his curtain ! and his bed the dust !
 When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne :
 In heaven itself can such indulgence dwell ?
 O what a groan was there ! a groan not his,
 HE seized our dreadful right ; the load sustain'd ;
 And heaved the mountain from a guilty world :
 A thousand worlds so bought were bought too dear.
 Sensations new, in angels bosoms rise ;
 Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.

O for their song to reach my lofty theme !
 Inspire me, night ! with all thy tuneful spheres inspire,
 Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,
 And shew to men the dignity of man ;
 Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.
 Shall pagan pages glow celestial flame,
 And christian languish ? on our hearts, not heads,
 Falls the foul infamy : my heart ! awake ;
 What can awake thee, unawaked by this ?—



Not thus, our infidels th' ETERNAL draw,
 " A GOD all o'er, consummate, absolute,
 " Full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete ;"
 They set at odds heaven's jarring attributes,
 And with one excellence another wound ;
 Maim heaven's perfection, break its equal beams,
 Bid mercy triumph over—GOD himself,
 Undeified by their opprobrious praise :
 A GOD all mercy is a GOD unjust.

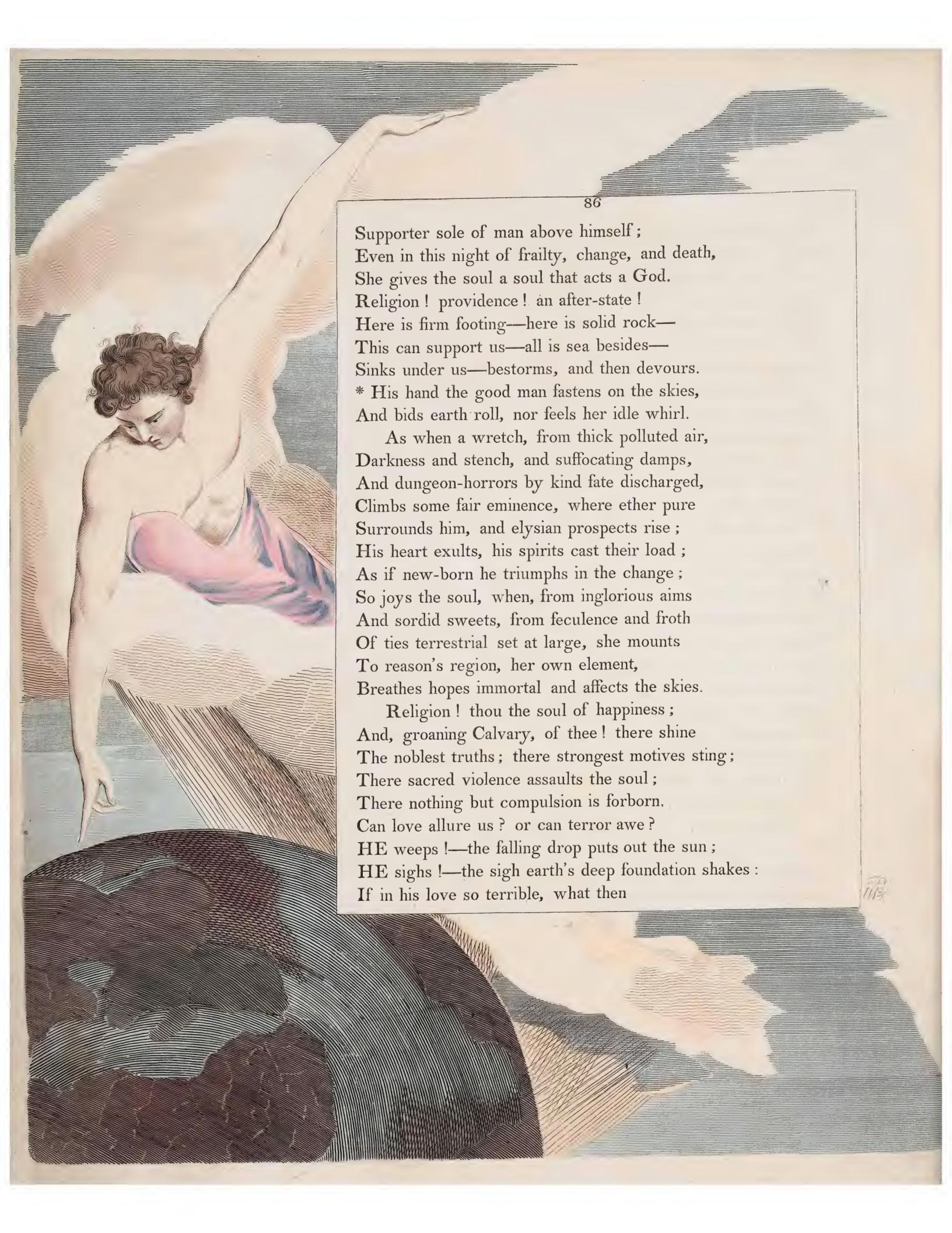
Ye brainless wits ! ye baptized infidels !
 Ye worse for mending ! wash'd to fouler stains !
 The ransom was paid down ; the fund of heaven,
 Heaven's inexhaustible exhausted fund,
 Amazing and amazed, pour'd forth the price
 All price beyond ; though curious to compute
 Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum :
 Its value vast ungrasp'd by minds create,
 For ever hides and glows in the SUPREME.

And was the ransom paid ? it was : and paid—
 What can exalt the bounty more ? for you :
 The sun beheld it—no, the shocking scene
 Drove back his chariot ; midnight veil'd his face,
 Not such as this, not such as nature makes ;
 A midnight nature shudder'd to behold ;
 A midnight new ! a dread eclipse, without
 Opposing spheres, from her CREATOR's frown !
 Sun ! didst thou fly thy MAKER's pain ? or start
 At that enormous load of human guilt,
 Which bow'd his blessed head ; o'erwhelm'd his cross ;
 Made groan the centre ; burst earth's marble womb

What, night eternal—but a frown from thee ?
 What, heaven's meridian glory—but thy smile ?
 And shall not praise be thine ? not human praise ?
 While heaven's high host on hallelujahs live ?

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe
 My soul in praise to HIM who gave my soul
 And all her infinite of prospect fair ;
 Cut through the shades of hell, great love ! by THEE,
 Oh most adorable, most unadored !
 Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should end ?
 Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause !
 How is night's sable mantle labour'd o'er !
 How richly wrought with attributes divine !
 What wisdom shines ! what love ! this midnight pomp,
 This gorgeous arch with golden worlds inlaid,
 Built with divine ambition, nought to THEE !
 For others this profusion : THOU apart,
 Above, beyond : oh tell me, mighty mind !
 Where art thou ? shall I dive into the deep ?
 Call to the sun, or ask the roaring winds
 For their creator ? shall I question loud
 * The thunder, if in that the ALMIGHTY dwells ?
 Or holds HE furious storms in streighten'd reins,
 And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car ?

What mean these questions ?—trembling I retract ;
 My prostrate soul adores the present GOD :
 Praise I a distant DEITY ? HE tunes
 My voice, if tuned ; the nerve that writes, sustains ;
 Wrapp'd in his being I resound his praise :
 But though past all diffused, without a shore



Supporter sole of man above himself ;
Even in this night of frailty, change, and death,
She gives the soul a soul that acts a God.
Religion ! providence ! an after-state !
Here is firm footing—here is solid rock—
This can support us—all is sea besides—
Sinks under us—bestorms, and then devours.
* His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

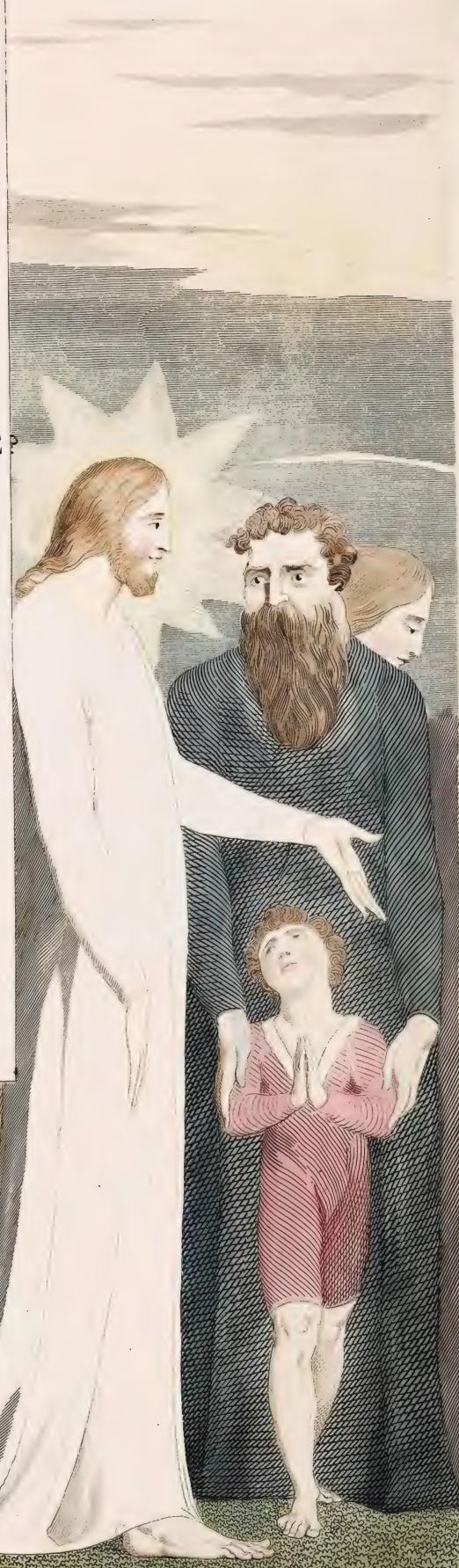
As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon-horrors by kind fate discharged,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and elysian prospects rise ;
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load ;
As if new-born he triumphs in the change ;
So joys the soul, when, from inglorious aims
And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth
Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts
To reason's region, her own element,
Breathes hopes immortal and affects the skies.

Religion ! thou the soul of happiness ;
And, groaning Calvary, of thee ! there shine
The noblest truths ; there strongest motives sting ;
There sacred violence assaults the soul ;
There nothing but compulsion is forborn.
Can love allure us ? or can terror awe ?
HE weeps !—the falling drop puts out the sun ;
HE sighs !—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes :
If in his love so terrible, what then

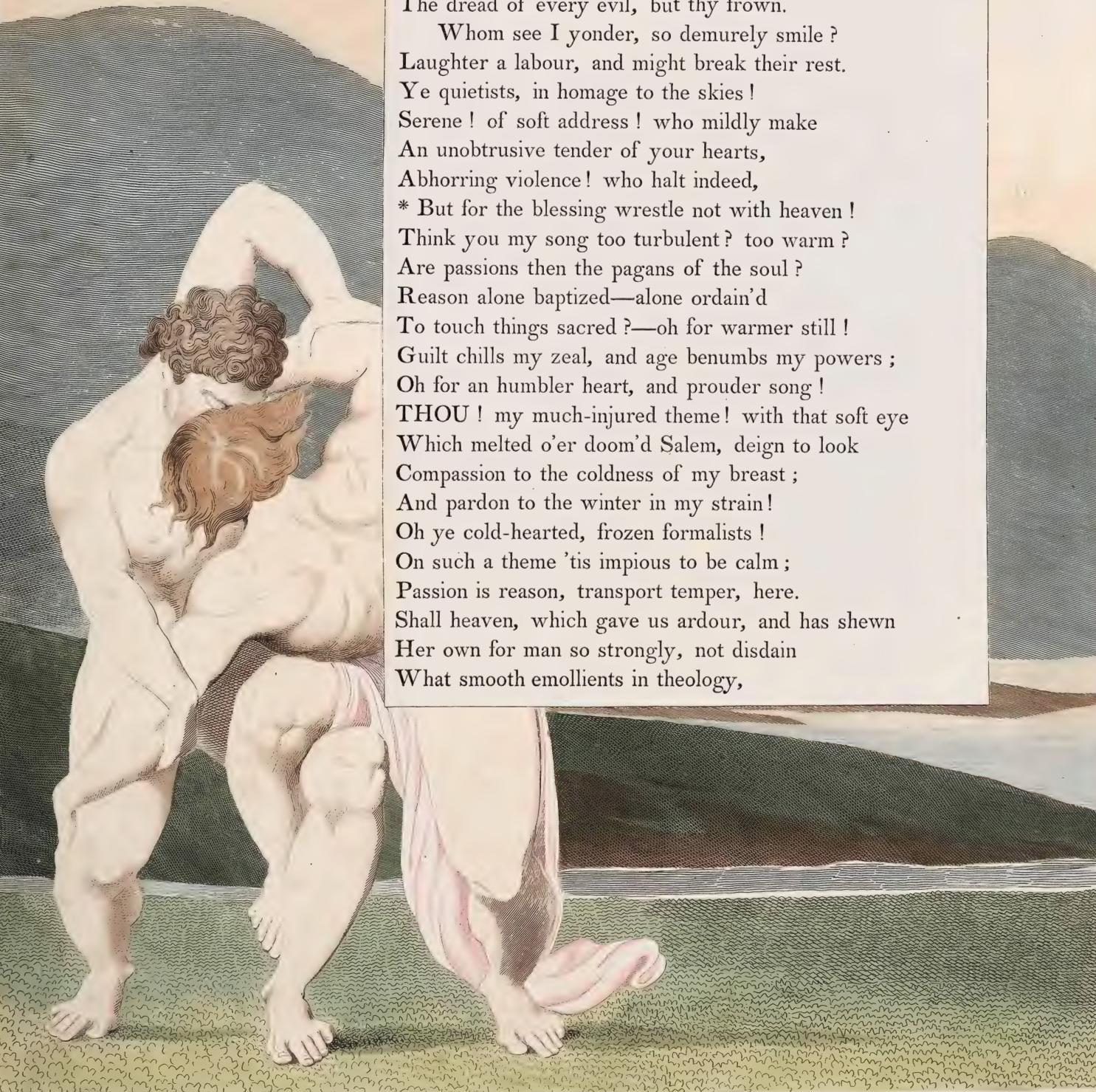
His wrath inflamed ? his tenderness on fire ;
 Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires ?
 Can prayer, can praise avert it ?—THOU ! my all,
 My theme, my inspiration, and my crown !
 My strength in age, my rise in low estate !
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth !—my world !
 My light in darkness, and my life in death !
 My boast through time ! bliss through eternity—
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise !
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man—
 To man of men the meanest, even to me !
 My sacrifice ! my GOD ! what things are these !

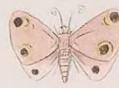
What then art THOU ? by what name shall I call THEE ?

Knew I the name devout archangels use,
 Devout archangels should the name enjoy
 By me unrivall'd ; thousands more sublime,
 None half so dear as that, which, though unspoke
 Still glows at heart : O how omnipotence
 * Is lost in love ! thou great PHILANTHROPIST !
 Father of angels ! but the friend of man !
 Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born !
 THOU ! who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
 From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood ;
 How art thou pleased by bounty to distress !
 To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
 Too big for birth ! to favour and confound ;
 To challenge, and to distance all return !
 Lavish of love, stupendous heights to soar
 And leave praise panting in the distant vale !
 Thy right too great defrauds THEE of thy due ;



And sacrilegious our sublimest song :
 But since the naked will obtains thy smile,
 Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,
 And future life symphonious to my strain,
 That noblest hymn to heaven ! for ever lie
 Intomb'd my fear of death ! and every fear,
 The dread of every evil, but thy frown.
 Whom see I yonder, so demurely smile ?
 Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.
 Ye quietists, in homage to the skies !
 Serene ! of soft address ! who mildly make
 An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,
 Abhorring violence ! who halt indeed,
 * But for the blessing wrestle not with heaven !
 Think you my song too turbulent ? too warm ?
 Are passions then the pagans of the soul ?
 Reason alone baptized—alone ordain'd
 To touch things sacred ?—oh for warmer still !
 Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my powers ;
 Oh for an humbler heart, and prouder song !
 THOU ! my much-injured theme ! with that soft eye
 Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look
 Compassion to the coldness of my breast ;
 And pardon to the winter in my strain !
 Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen formalists !
 On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm ;
 Passion is reason, transport temper, here.
 Shall heaven, which gave us ardour, and has shewn
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
 What smooth emollients in theology,





'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise ;
'Tis impious in a good man to be sad.

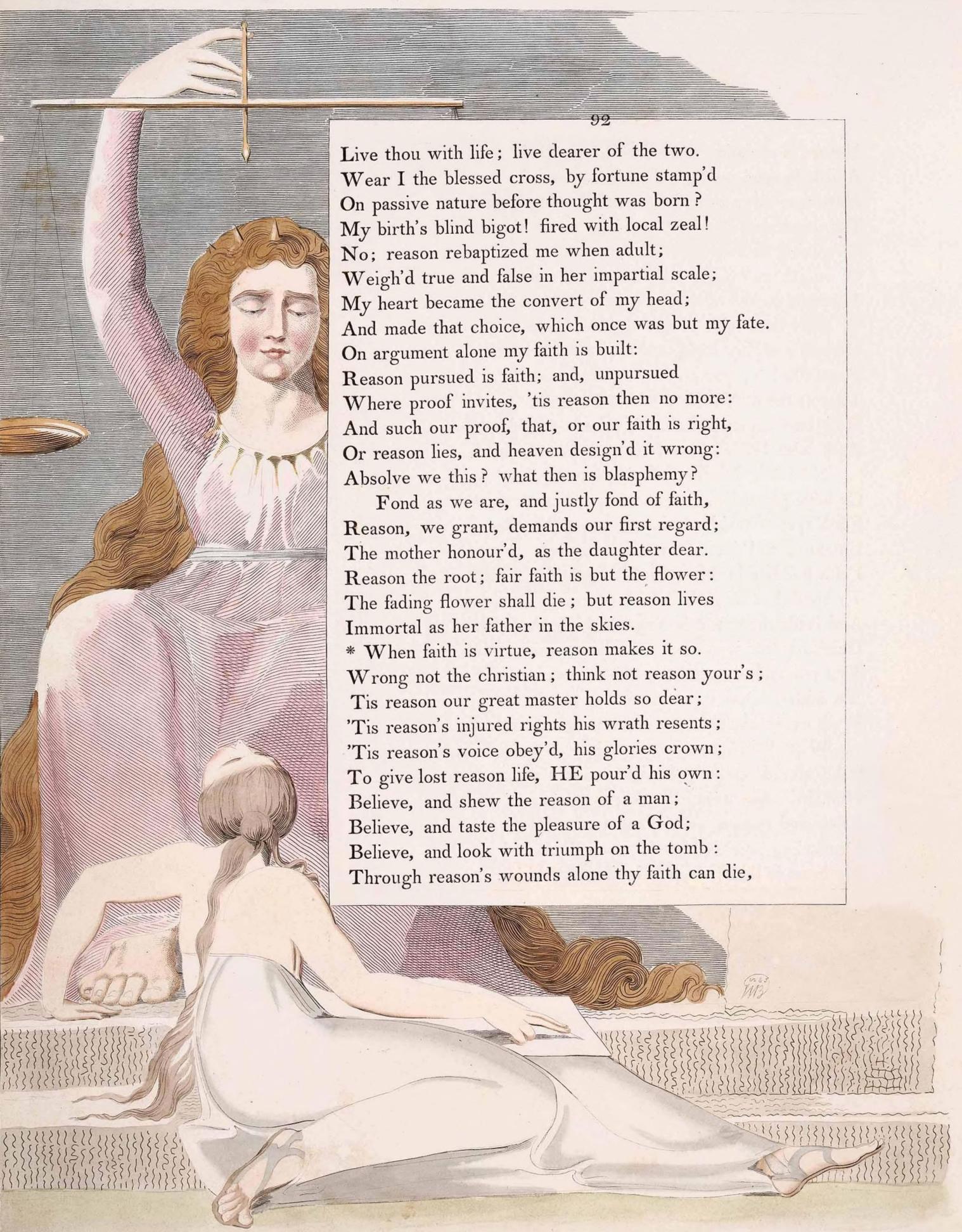
Seest thou, LORENZO ! where hangs all our hope ?
Touch'd by the cross we live ;—or more than die :
That touch, which touch'd not angels ; more divine
Than that which touch'd confusion into form
And darkness into glory ; partial touch !
Ineffably pre-eminent regard
Sacred to man ! and sovereign, through the whole
Long golden chain of miracles which hangs
From heaven through all duration, and supports
In one illustrious and amazing plan !
Thy welfare, nature ! and thy GOD's renown !
* That touch, with charm celestial heals the soul
Diseased, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
Turns earth to heaven, to heavenly thrones transforms
The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb !

Dost ask me when ? when HE who died returns :—
Returns, how changed ! where then the man of woe ?
In glory's terrors all the godhead burns ;
And all his courts, exhausted by the tide
Of deities triumphant in his train,
Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven ;
Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase
Of pomp and multitude, a radiant band
Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.

Is this by fancy thrown remote ? and rise
Dark doubts between the promise and event ?
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure,
Read nature ; nature is a friend to truth ;

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Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.
 Wear I the blessed cross, by fortune stamp'd
 On passive nature before thought was born?
 My birth's blind bigot! fired with local zeal!
 No; reason rebaptized me when adult;
 Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale;
 My heart became the convert of my head;
 And made that choice, which once was but my fate.
 On argument alone my faith is built:
 Reason pursued is faith; and, unpursued
 Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:
 And such our proof, that, or our faith is right,
 Or reason lies, and heaven design'd it wrong:
 Absolve we this? what then is blasphemy?

Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,
 Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;
 The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.
 Reason the root; fair faith is but the flower:
 The fading flower shall die; but reason lives
 Immortal as her father in the skies.

* When faith is virtue, reason makes it so.
 Wrong not the christian; think not reason your's;
 Tis reason our great master holds so dear;
 'Tis reason's injured rights his wrath resents;
 'Tis reason's voice obey'd, his glories crown;
 To give lost reason life, HE pour'd his own:
 Believe, and shew the reason of a man;
 Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;
 Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb:
 Through reason's wounds alone thy faith can die,

Which, dying, tenfold terror gives to death,
And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans due
To those, who push our antidote aside ;
Those boasted friends to reason and to man,
Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves
Death's terror heighten'd gnawing on his heart :
These pompous sons of reason idolized
And vilified at once ; of reason dead,
Then deified, as monarchs were of old ;
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow ?
While love of truth through all their camp resounds,
They draw pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
Spike up their inch of reason on the point
Of philosophick wit, call'd argument ;
And then, exulting in their taper, cry,
" Behold the sun ; " and, Indian-like, adore.

Talk they of morals ? O thou bleeding love !
Thou maker of new morals to mankind !
The grand morality is love of THEE.
As wise as Socrates, if such they were,
Nor will they bate of that sublime renown,
As wise as Socrates might justly stand
The definition of a modern fool.

A christian is the highest stile of man :
And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,
As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow ?
* If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight ;
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,
More struck with grief or wonder, who can tell ?



113

By the great edict, the divine decree,
Truth is deposited with man's last hour ;
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust :
Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity ;
Truth, of his council when he made the worlds,
Nor less when he shall judge the worlds he made ;
Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys ;
That heaven-commission'd hour no sooner calls,
But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
Like him they fable under *Ætna* whelm'd,
* The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame ;
Loudly convinces, and severely pains :
Dark demons I discharge, and hydra-stings ;
The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell :
Just definition ! though by schools untaught.
Ye deaf to truth ! peruse this parson'd page,
And trust for once a prophet and a priest ;
“ Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.”

